

THE ANNUAL REPORT (1905.)  
of the  
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH  
FOR THE  
URBAN DISTRICT of SHANKLIN.

Gentlemen, -

During the past year there have been registered within the above district seventy three (73) births, consisting of thirty five (35) males and thirty eight (38) females, of these three (3) were illegitimate, which works out an illegitimate birth rate of 41 per 1000 births. The birth rate for the past year is therefore 13.5 per 1000 of population as against 11.8 last year, which latter was exceptionally low indeed the lowest I have recorded during the last 10 years.

There have been registered within the district during the past year Fifty (50) deaths viz. twenty three (23) males and twenty seven (27) females, which is a death rate of only 9.2 per 1000 of population, as compared with 10.1 per 1000 last year. This is the lowest death rate recorded during the last 10 years.



Upon analysis this will be found to be a remarkable death rate. From the point of view of age the deaths occurred as follows: -

Under one year there were							2 deaths.
Over one year and under	5 years	"	"				2 "
"	5 years	"	"	15 years	"	"	2 "
"	15	"	"	25	"	"	2 "
"	25	"	"	65	"	"	17 "
"	65	"	"	"	"	"	25 "
							<hr/> 50 <hr/>

It will be seen therefore that 50 % of the deaths were those of people over 65 years of age, the average attained by those 50 people being just over 80 years, this is remarkable and the more so when you consider that this is a health resort to which a large number of people in delicate health find their way, indeed quite one third of deaths between the ages of 15 years and 65 years viz. in the active period of life, were those of visitors who had come here on account of their failing health. The above are facts which speak for themselves and need no extended notice on my part.



Consider further the fact that during the year there have been but three cases of zynotic disease notified to me as M.O.H. viz. 3 cases of Diphtheria in children, and I think there is justifiable grounds for congratulation. I regret that one of the cases of diphtheria proved fatal, but that was the case of a child sent from a distance to the surgical Hospital for children in an enfeebled state from Chronic disease.

As to causation the deaths were returned as follows: -

3	were	due	to	Senile decay.
7	"	"	"	Cerebral haemorrhage.
6	"	"	"	Cancer.
5	"	"	"	Phthisis.
4	"	"	"	Bronchitis.
4	"	"	"	Brights disease.
3	"	"	"	Pneumonia.
2	"	"	"	Meningitis.
2	"	"	"	Diabetes.
I	was	due	to	General tuberculosis.
I.	"	"	"	Diphtheria.
I	"	"	"	Peritonitis.
I	"	"	"	Lymphadenoma.





I may here mention that although "Influenza" does not appear in the returns as a cause of death, it was nevertheless mentioned in the death returns in the case of three of the aged people as a contributory cause of death. As the question of the prevalence of Cancer has been frequently put to me privately I have gone over the returns of the last ten years and find that the death rate per 1000 of population is just the same for this district as for the country generally. Further it has frequently been suggested to me that certain localised portions of the district were particularly affected by this disease; but I find on investigation that this is not the case and that the cases have been pretty evenly distributed over the district.

I do not know whether it is possible for you to do anything to bring it to the notice of parents that the practice of cigarette smoking indulged in by their children is a most pernicious and baneful influence. It is a growing habit amongst the boys of most tender age and it is aggravated by the fact that the cigarettes they spend their pennies upon are made of cheap and inferior tobacco and worse paper. I believe that one bill was brought into Parliament and I sincerely hope that another will be brought to a successful issue. It appears to me that corporate bodies having interests in the public health might combine to put a check upon this deteriorating effect upon our youths.





During the past year the Arthur Webster memorial Hospital has been opened and as most of you already know it is a Cottage Hospital for Shanklin, containing two wards of three beds each, one for women, and the other for men. Infectious cases are of course not admitted and must be sent as before to the conjoint Hospital (Sandown and Shanklin) for infectious diseases. The Hospital was a gift from Lord Alverstone to Shanklin in memory of his only son who died at his residence here.

It is managed by a committee elected by the annual subscribers, it being supported by voluntary subscriptions, with the exception of an endowment left by the late Harriet Parr, of which latter fund Dr.Dabbs is the trustee. You may now consider that your district is fortunate in it's hospital accommodation and is well provided for in that respect. Considering that you gave already Mrs.Scaramanga's Hospital for children, which she has generously endowed, and which is managed by a local committee the Committee of the Cottage Hospital have very wisely decided to run the institution with an average of not more than four patients for the first year in order that they may judge how the income suffices for the efficient maintenance of the Hospital.



## Schools.

The sanitation of the parochial schools of Shanklin has during the past year been entirely remodelled. The lavatories etc. having been removed away from the school houses and provided with modern sanitary fittings, the water closets being arranged in groups with separate flushing apparatus. The drains also have all been relaid right out to the sewer. Thorough ventilation of the school rooms now exists and you may therefore consider that the schools have been put into a sound sanitary condition.

## Drainage.

As regards the main sewers no defects have been brought to my notice during the past year, nor have I had complaints of smells from the catch pits except such as were due to local causes and such as were easily remedied.

As regards house sanitation, much good work has been done and thirty nine cases of defective sanitary fittings and nuisances so arising have been dealt with during the year.

Regarding the question of sanitary certificates I am a little disappointed to find that only 12 old certificates had been renewed while fifteen new certificates have been granted, which reaches a total of only twenty seven certified houses.





That of course does not represent the number of certifiable houses within the district, far from it. One must bear in mind also that the standard now required is so much higher than it used to be that it is not possible to draw conclusions from the present rate of certification as compared with that of six or eight years ago. It would be however most unwise to reduce the high standard now required, for if a sanitary certificate is to be of any value it must be of such a nature as to be a perfect guarantee to any visitor coming here and occupying a house with such a certificate.

#### Water supply.

I had hoped that the scheme for obtaining an adequate water supply from Chillerton would have reached a stage more near realisation than it has. I trust however that the later stages of the scheme will be got over with somewhat less loss of time than the earlier, and that you will soon be in a position to say that the water supply of Shanklin is settled. I have dwelt at length upon this question in so many previous reports that I feel it would be a waste of time to go over the same ground again.





## Notification of Infectious and Contagious Diseases.

It appears to me that the time has arrived when Tuberculosis ought to be a notifiable disease. The ravages of pulmonary tuberculosis (Phthisis) are well known to every one, and when one considers the numbers of young people between say the ages of 15 and 35 or 40 years that are annually carried off by this disease it is obvious that every thing that can be done of a preventative nature ought to be done to mitigate this state of affairs.

At all events I would say that all cases of pulmonary tuberculosis and all other cases of tuberculosis in which there is an open wound or sore ought to be notifiable. Every one now freely admits the contagiousness of the disease, that is no longer in dispute; indeed the disease is known to be propagated by contagion from one person to another by means of the tubercular discharges whether from the lungs or other parts of the body. That it claims more victims than any other disease in the British Isles is a fact well known to most if not all of you, indeed it is stated that a third of the deaths occurring in people in the most active period of their lives (say 18 to 35) therefore at a time when they are of most value to the state, is due to some form of tuberculosis. Amongst well informed people notification may not be so necessary but



amongst the ill informed it certainly would be of great value, indeed I do not see how tuberculosis can be efficiently dealt with without notification.

Upon the notification of such a case, printed instructions should be sent to the person so afflicted indicating briefly and clearly how the tubercular discharges can be easily and efficiently rendered innocuous to their fellow creatures. Surely it can only be through ignorance that people propagate such a disease, that being so all sanitary authorities ought to have the power to reduce this ignorance as far as possible. Further, upon a person affected by tuberculosis leaving a house or room, the rooms that were occupied by the patient ought to be disinfected by the sanitary authority. The spread of knowledge regarding the nature of this terrible disease has done much to decrease the death rate therefrom; but much more needs to be done.

#### Scavenging.

This has been upon the whole well and efficiently carried out. I have of course met with individual cases in which it was necessary to point out that the removal of refuse had been too infrequent. On some occasions the cart man in charge of the refuse carts might be more careful to have the covers of their carts in order and so prevent the blowing about of the







light parts of the refuse they carry, neglect of this is sure to give rise to well founded complaints. It is obvious of course that it is not only a nuisance but a danger to have the dust from refuse carts blow about the inhabited parts of the district.

### Meteorology.

The past year has not been particularly remarkable from a meteorological point of view. The rainfall was just about the average or rather over it viz. 31.20 inc. It was decidedly a year of mild weather, particularly without either frost or snow, indeed with the exception of the month of January in which we had on one occasion 4° of frost we literally had for eleven months the thermometer standing always above the freezing point. December was a remarkably mild month, the thermometer never being within several degrees of the freezing point. It was certainly a fine summer, the months of May and July having together less than three quarters of an inch of rain. Although the heat was considerable in many parts of England the highest point reached here was 76° F. (shade) and that was during the month of July. According to the observations taken by your surveyor we had an average of 6 hours of sunshine per day throughout the year. May attained the highest point in this respect and shewed the remarkable average of 11



hours of sunshine per day throughout the month, July however, was practically the same being but 4 or 5 hours less on the whole month.

Factories, Workshops, Laundries, Workplaces etc.

There are no factories or workshops in which any manufacture is carried on that is in any way detrimental to health. In fact these places consist of Laundries, Bakehouses and Carpenters shops, besides these there are three Printers establishments, two Mineral water manufactories, two Sausage makers, one Whitesmith and Cycle depot, one Brewery, one Gasworks and one Timber yard. There is no question of overcrowding for the most of the places occupy only one or two and sometimes three workpeople as the case may be. As a matter of fact no overcrowding has been found. Ventilation has been found to be efficient.

Limewashing is carried out regularly at stated times according to the rules laid down. The defects arise entirely from a want of general cleanliness and this is a point that has had to be pointed out in some cases during inspection.

I am Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

*John Cooper M. D. H.*

